The

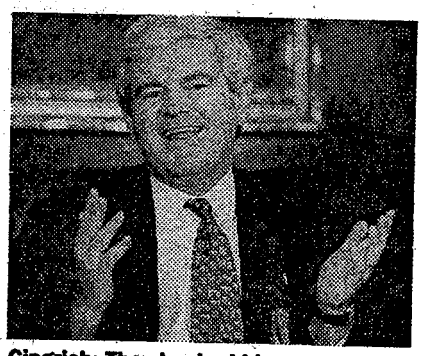
Post 3/3/95

An Unpopular Booking

Some Chicago-area book dealers are ready to, well, throw the book at the American Booksellers Association over its decision to invite **Newt Gingrich** to speak at the group's annual convention in June.

The five dealers, who made up a host committee charged with recommending speakers for a "Power Lunch" at the three-day Chicago extravaganza, considered the House speaker—and nixed him. Next thing they knew, Gingrich was on the agenda, courtesy of ABA Executive Director **Bernie Rath.**

"At the time we were deciding, he was making all these idiotic statements. We did not like him," said committee member **Roberta Rubin.** "We're just insulted that it was done behind our back. And we don't even know when his book is coming out." Gingrich, as you may have heard, is writing a tome called "To Renew America"—which brought him a multi-million-dollar advance, until an avalanche of protest caused him to change the terms.



Gingrich: They booked him.

Rath yesterday called the whole thing a "tempest in a teapot." "The committee members were under the impression that they were making all the decisions, but they serve an advisory function," he said, explaining that there were glitches with the group's first two choices, **George Bush** and **William Bennett.** "I'm putting together a power lunch. Newt's got a million-copy book coming out in the fall. I asked Newt, and he said yes."

And after all this, the loquacious Gingrich will only have 10 minutes to make his pitch.